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Patient Groups Urge U.S. Supreme Court to Prioritize Patients and Uphold Health Care Law

Protections for Pre-Existing Conditions and Coverage Standards at Risk

Washington, D.C.—November 9, 2020— Twenty patient groups representing millions of Americans with pre-existing conditions are urging the U.S. Supreme Court to prioritize patient protections, including those for people with pre-existing conditions, when it hears oral arguments Tuesday in the case of *California v. Texas* (previously *Texas v. United States*). The groups cite the devastating impact patients would face should the court rule to invalidate the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The patient groups, which filed an [amicus brief](#) in May, argue the law has expanded access to health insurance coverage and has improved patient outcomes as Congress intended. Congress' decision to keep the ACA in place after zeroing out the tax penalty tied to the individual mandate reinforces that intent.

Following is the groups' joint statement:

“Millions of Americans rely on the critical patient protections included in the Affordable Care Act to access, afford and retain meaningful health coverage that is essential for their wellbeing. The coronavirus pandemic has only served to underscore the necessity of meaningful coverage— especially for those who are at high risk of being severely affected by the virus—including countless Americans who have pre-existing, acute or chronic conditions like heart disease, cancer, diabetes, lung diseases and multiple sclerosis.

“If the entire health care law is invalidated, health plans could once again deny coverage to anyone with a pre-existing condition, set arbitrary lifetime and annual limits on care, and skirt essential benefits necessary to prevent and treat acute conditions. The link between access to comprehensive health coverage and patient outcomes is well established. Because of the ACA there have been statistically significant shifts toward early-stage diagnosis for several common cancers, a surge of people getting screened for and diagnosed with diabetes, and a significant drop in uninsured substance abuse or mental health disorder hospitalizations in states that expanded Medicaid. Additionally, Medicaid expansion states have seen improvements in the health of women of childbearing age with increased access to preventive care, reduced adverse health outcomes before, during and after pregnancies, and reduced maternal and infant mortality rates.

“Eliminating the law could quickly reverse these gains. It also would jeopardize the federal tax credits that make health insurance more affordable for millions of Americans, threatening their access to critical health coverage, and rescind Medicaid expansion funding, crippling the safety net health insurance program at a time when millions more unemployed Americans have no alternate coverage option.

“Ending the patient protections and improved patient access to health care coverage would ignore the will of Congress at the expense of millions of Americans who would lose their coverage and millions more who would likely be unable to obtain coverage due to pre-existing conditions. We urge the Supreme Court to uphold the law and preserve access to health insurance for millions of Americans.”

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The groups on the brief include the American Cancer Society, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, and its division, the American Stroke Association, American Lung Association, Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Epilepsy Foundation, Hemophilia Federation of America, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, March of Dimes, Muscular Dystrophy Association, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, National Hemophilia Foundation, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, National Organization for Rare Disorders, National Patient Advocate Foundation, and the Kennedy Forum.